

OPENING SPEECH BY H.E AMBASSADOR (Dr.) OLAWALE
MAYEGUN, DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT,
AFRICAN UNION, AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE MEETING
OF THE ASSAMBLY OF ACADEMICIAN AND THE SCIENTIFIC AND
TECHNICAL CIMMITTEE OF ACALAN AT THE AFRICAN UNION
CONFERENCE CENTER ON 16 DECEMBER 2013

The Commissioner,

The Director,

The Executive Secretary of ACALAN,

The President of the Assembly of Academician,

The Chairpersons of the Vehicular Cross Border Language Commissions,

ACALAN Focal Persons,

Ladies and gentlemen,

First of all, let me welcome you all to Addis Ababa, the Headquarters of the African Union and to thank everyone for honoring the invitation to be at this meeting at a short notice.

This meeting marks a milestone in the progress towards the development of African Languages. It gives me great pleasure to be part of this meeting which is convened to strategize on the way forward in the achievement of the development of our languages in Africa.

Let me at this juncture recognize two of the members of this committee who after they have contributed their best to the development of African languages and have served meritoriously either as member of the Assembly

of Academician or Scientific and Technical Committee member have passed on to the great beyond. We remember Professor Neville Alexander as well as Professor Morris Tadadjeu who both left us last year, may their gentle souls rest in peace.

As we all know that Language plays a critical part in the development of the following: individual's perception of the world, national pride and identity, culture, thought and practice as well as a vehicle of a people's culture and the actualization of their creativity and participation in the economy, employment and wealth creation. The founding fathers of the African Union have thought it wise to create the African Academy of Languages (ACALAN) to foster this development. This is a fact that is open to everyone in this gathering today.

The African Academy of Languages (ACALAN) as we all know has three organs, namely the Governing Board, the Assembly of Academicians and the Scientific and Technical Committee. The Governing Board is concerned with Administration and Policy issues of ACALAN whereas the Assembly of Academician and the Scientific and Technical Committee perform advisory duties.

According to the status, the three organs are expected to meet to carry out their statutory functions. Articles 15 and 19 on meetings, quorum and decisions of the Technical and Scientific Committee and the Assembly of Academicians state that the meetings of the Scientific Committee shall be convened by the President or the Executive Secretary at least twice a year

at the Headquarters of ACALAN or as often as they deem it necessary, while the Assembly of Academician shall meet every two (2) years in ordinary session, at ACALAN's Headquarters or in any other Member State at the latter's invitation.

However, since the creation of the Assembly of Academicians and Technical and Scientific committee, they have not been able to meet in the last four years due to various reasons among which is budgetary constraints. The last meeting they held was at Bamako on the 4th of December 2009 when the Malian authorities formally handed ACALAN over to the African Union Commission. Efforts have been made to convey this meeting so that the provisions in ACALAN's Statue are met.

The main objective of this meeting is to review the activities of the Vehicular Cross Border Language Commissions which are one of the structures of ACALAN at the grass root level; to see what they have achieved, and to chart the way forward for the next three years-2014-2017.

Ladies and Gentlemen, it is my sincere hope that at the end of this meeting, concrete achievement would have been recorded and ACALAN would have been re-positioned for the tasks of developing African languages as set out in their statutes.

Finally, let me assure you at this juncture, ladies and gentlemen, that the Department of Social Affairs will do everything possible to assist these bodies to put in their possible best in the performance of their duties.

Thank you very much

Merci beaucoup

Asante Sana

Abrigado

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Opening speech by H.E Ambassador
(Dr.) OLAWALE Mayegun, Director of
Social affairs department, African
union, at the opening ceremony of the
meeting of the aAsambly of
Academician and the scientific and
technical Committee of ACALAN at the
African union Conference center on 16
december 2013

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